

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF CENTRAL REFERENCE

OCR NOTICE

CR 22-2

1 September 1964

AREA FAMILIARIZATION TRAVEL

1. This memorandum sets forth OCR policies and procedures concerning foreign travel for area familiarization. It does not affect foreign travel undertaken in response to specific operating requirements.

2. OCR has a large number of personnel who are engaged in intelligence programs which concern all aspects of international affairs. It is upon this group of skilled professionals that OCR must rely in the fulfillment of its responsibilities. In the development of fundamental analytical skills a great deal can be accomplished through orthodox academic programs, but for a foreign intelligence analyst there is no substitute for personal, first-hand knowledge of the countries concerned. For this reason the Agency has long recognized that travel for purposes of indoctrination and area familiarization is a valid undertaking. The policies governing such travel have never been set forth in Agency Regulations, but the doctrine itself was expressed in a memorandum signed by the DCI on 26 March 1955, subject: "Foreign Travel Under Area Familiarization and Survey Programs."

3. A major weakness in OCR's present career development program is that it provides overseas exposure for too few people. In the DD/P and in many offices of the DD/S this foreign experience comes in the form of TDY travel or PCS assignments during the normal progression of individual careers. The DD/I has relatively few overseas PCS positions and infrequent requirements for TDY operational travel. The average OCR employee, therefore, finds that opportunities for official foreign travel are extremely limited. As a consequence, we have many employees assuming significant responsibilities for geographic areas they have never seen. To overcome these deficiencies we now propose to implement an area familiarization travel program as described below.

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GROUP I  
Excluded From Automatic  
Downgrading and  
Declassification

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4. The objective of the foreign travel program is to identify and provide training and experience to those individuals who plan to make a career in the Agency and who have the potential for future key assignments in OCR or in other offices of the DD/I. The travel will be an integral part of the planned career development of the employees who are selected. This is particularly true for mid-careerists and the travel should be clearly related to the individual's five-year plan. Consideration will also be given to other employees whose careers may not be developing along executive lines, but who are otherwise qualified in terms of performance in a substantive position and of potential for significant contributions in the future. Senior staff members (grade GS-12 - 14) should be given first consideration, since this is the group from which the successors to the present division and branch management will be selected. Special justification will be required in those instances where the employee is in grade GS-11 or below, has less than five years of Agency experience, or has had other pertinent overseas travel.

5. Area familiarization travel is not to be regarded as a non-work assignment. Each nomination must include statements concerning the nominee's proposed activity at each point on his itinerary and the relationship of the travel to his present duties. It should also relate the proposed trip to his probable future assignments and give the reasons for the selection of the area which he plans to visit. It is assumed that the program will be planned sufficiently in advance to enable the nominee to devote part of his own time to preparation for the trip. This would include not only study of the area but perhaps limited language instruction as well. The employee should also be generally familiar with the overseas reporting requirements of OCR components other than the one to which he is currently assigned. The Administrative Staff will arrange DD/I and DD/P briefings to assure that travelers have at least an elementary understanding of the Agency's overseas activities as well as travel requirements and restrictions. Trip reports will be required not later than one month after the employee's return.

6. It is not intended that the traveler follow an office routine while he is overseas. This could limit the usefulness of the trip and cause an undue burden on the overseas stations. However, arrangements will be made for each traveler to be briefed at selected overseas installations to give him some idea of the functions and management of these facilities. All employees will, of course, follow established procedures in reporting their presence at each post. The trip should be arranged to provide the individual with the greatest possible benefit in the time available. The optimum period is about five weeks, although longer trips may be approved when justified. Short periods of annual leave may be permitted at specific points en route.

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7. Travel programs will be approved by the Career Board on an annual or semi-annual basis. Nominations for travel during the first half of 1965 should be submitted to the Administrative Staff by 11 September; those approved will be notified by 1 October. Every effort will be made to schedule the travel evenly over the year, but travel will not normally be approved for the period 1 June - 30 August. During this period accommodations are crowded with tourists, and overseas installations are short-handed as a result of vacations and normal personnel rotations. If any proposed trip involves specific timing requirements, these should be clearly stated in the nomination. Each request should state the traveler's first and second choice concerning the proposed dates of travel.

8. If additional guidance is required, the Administrative Staff will be glad to assist.

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Assistant Director  
Central Reference

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